closing the

confidence gap

bring clarity to your revenue growth strategy

corporate visions
conversations that **win**®

a startling lack of confidence

When it comes to revenue growth, what separates the leaders from the laggards?

It's not your products or services. In any category, many companies have similar offerings.

It's not your people. There are talented people in every organization.

And it's not your leadership. Most leaders are pretty good at setting and defining a growth strategy.

The real difference is the ability—or inability—to execute on that growth strategy. And the number one concern we hear from commercial leaders right now is uncertainty about their ability to execute.

This is borne out by research from Sales Benchmark Index, which found that **only 45 percent of CEOs are confident in their team's ability to execute on their growth strategy**. That means that 55 percent—the majority—are not!

So how do you close that confidence gap?

For years, sales organizations have relied on so-called "best practices" to increase confidence and improve execution. They study what other organizations have done, or maybe what they've done in the past, and try to mimic those tactics for their current company or situation.

The problem is, best practices are only theories based on surveys, anecdotes, and urban legends. They're the opinions of someone who said, "This is what helped us," and everyone else is supposed to believe that it will help them, too.

But there's no scientific rigor involved in vetting those claims, no correlation between cause and effect, and no evidence that any particular action led to that specific result.

In other words, best practices are really just best guesses.

And if you're making business decisions based on best guesses (outdated ones at that, because best practices are always backward looking), is it any wonder you don't have confidence in your ability to execute?

Tim Riesterer
Chief Strategy Officer
Corporate Visions

how much would you risk on your *best guess?*

It's a case of good intentions, but wrong instincts.

Most companies follow so-called "best practices" to develop and execute their plans because it's all they know.

But **a winning strategy is actually the sum total of things you might not be thinking about**—that is:

1. **Your growth plays**—the specific initiatives you need to launch to address your top revenue challenges.
2. **Your growth levers**—the focus areas that will have the most immediate and profound impact on your performance.
3. **Your growth teams** (all of them, not just sales)—the people you rely on to transform growth into a truly cross-functional effort.

A single deviation in any of these three areas could lead to a wildly different outcome and, ultimately, a failure to pull off the strategy you've worked so hard to build.

In the past, you might have been able to get away with a best-guess approach. But when you pursue a best-guess approach in a digital world, you're very likely at odds with the way buyers actually make decisions.

As a result, you raise frustration on your buyer's team. You raise frustration on your own team. And you end up elongating sales cycles at a time when buyers are already doing everything they can to prolong them for you.

The best approach to execution doesn't rely on guesswork or theories, but rather on actual scientific research and testing. That means understanding how your buyers frame value and make choices—to purposefully align your growth plays, your growth levers, and your growth teams. Only then can you execute your plan with clarity and confidence.

a science-backed approach

Nicci Nesmith Hammerel
General Manager, Research and Advisory

What most people call "research" is just a poorly-disguised opinion dressed up as an industry survey. That's not truly scientific research.

Scientific research follows a systematic process that involves making observations, coming up with hypotheses, collecting data to test those hypotheses, and drawing conclusions based on the results. It's also conducted in a controlled testing environment.

Survey-based research, however, collects thoughts and opinions from a large group of people who fit a certain demographic. It fails to accurately reflect people's true behaviors because the surveys are usually designed around an ideal, expected outcome. The results merely reflect what people *think* they would do, or what they would ideally do—not how they actually behave.

That's why our Ph.D. researchers and analysts conduct behavioral studies, neuroscience research, and real-world field trials to test hypotheses like a true science lab, with academic rigor and scientific integrity.

Sometimes the research confirms what was expected. Other times, the results are completely counterintuitive. But in every case, we follow the research—not our best guesses or personal opinions.

execute your growth strategy with

clarity and confidence

When you replace guesswork with science, you can align your approach to the way buyers actually make decisions. When you understand their subconscious, situational motivations, you can execute any growth play in the moment using the right message, skills, and technology to win that moment. And when you do all this, you'll be able to close the gap between strategies and outcomes—leading to faster sales cycles and outsized revenue growth.

- **PRIORITIZE YOUR GROWTH PLAYS**
- **IDENTIFY YOUR GROWTH LEVERS**
- **ENABLE YOUR GROWTH TEAMS**

execute your growth strategy with clarity and confidence

prioritize your *growth plays*

prioritize your *growth plays*

Each growth play represents a specific initiative you can launch to address your most pressing revenue challenges.

For example, do you need to improve your customer acquisition efforts to build a more qualified pipeline, motivate executive decision makers, and close more deals? Or is your focus more on customer expansion—leveraging your relationships with existing customers to grow more revenue with cross-sell and upsell conversations?

Every growth play can have an outsized impact on your revenue growth, but each play requires a distinct approach.

ACQUISITION	WIN-BACKS	MARGINS	RETENTION	EXPANSION
Disrupt Status Quo Bias to win new business	Show how you've changed to reclaim lost business	Protect profitability and pass on price increases	Reinforce Status Quo Bias to renew existing business	Leverage your relationship and evolve your solution to grow customer spend

status quo bias

The psychology of a prospect (who currently has an incumbent vendor you're trying to displace) is fundamentally different from the psychology of a customer (when you're the incumbent trying to protect or expand the relationship). And it's all because of a psychological concept called "Status Quo Bias."

Psychological studies have shown that when faced with a decision, most people tend to stick with their status quo.

People naturally view change as costly and unsafe. If the perceived benefits of a new solution don't outweigh the perceived costs of change, people tend to resist taking action. They prefer instead to continue on the path they're already on—even if the alternative is objectively better.

What does this mean for your revenue growth strategy?

Status Quo Bias is a powerful force that can either be your best friend or your worst enemy. If you understand how your prospects and customers are framing their decision to change their solution or stay with their status quo, you're more likely to persuade them to choose you in either situation.

When you understand key concepts like Status Quo Bias, you can begin to create tailored messages and develop the situational skills needed to match your buyer's motivations in every growth play, on both the acquisition and expansion sides of the customer lifecycle.

the four causes of status quo bias

In his study, *The Psychology of Doing Nothing*, behavioral psychologist Christopher Anderson details the four causes of Status Quo Bias.

1. Preference Stability – If a customer's preferences change less often, or remain static, they're more likely to stick with what they're doing today. Conversely, if you destabilize their preferences, you increase their openness to change.

2. Anticipated Regret/Blame – Humans chafe at the possibility of regret. It elicits all sorts of negative anticipatory emotions such as fear, dread, and anxiety. While the consequences of actual regret will play out in the future, the emotional experience of regret takes place in the present.

3. Cost of Action/Change – Changing the status quo often involves a cost of some kind—the transactional costs associated with the change, or the transitional resourcing costs of changing to something new. Change seems risky or costly, while sticking with the status quo registers as either neutral or even beneficial—even in the face of contrary evidence.

4. Selection Difficulty – When prospects and customers are overwhelmed with too many options and too little contrast, everything seems to look alike. This amplifies their tendency to view change as complex and cumbersome.

acquire new customers

Your prospects don't want to buy from you. But it's not because you don't have an appealing solution.

It's because people don't want to change.

When a prospect takes your call—even if they reach out to you first—it's not because they've already decided to do something different. They're talking to you to determine whether they need to do something different. So their first reaction will be to see whether their current solution can be "stretched" to overcome any challenges you identify.

Their situation might not be ideal, but it's what they know. And they won't change if they can get by with what they already have.

That's why **at least 40 percent of deals in the pipeline end in "no decision."** Prospects don't see a compelling enough reason to change from their current situation, so they decide to do nothing at all.

In other words, your biggest enemy when acquiring new customers is not your competitors—it's Status Quo Bias.

Know why your prospect's status quo is always lurking, ready to put the kibosh on your deals no matter how compelling your presentations are? Because the status quo hasn't killed them yet. Dissatisfied as they might be, your prospects have adapted to the best of their abilities and forged ahead in the face of gaps and deficiencies.

Inertia is powerful. To overcome it, you need to tell a powerful, disruptive story that makes your prospect's current situation seem unsafe and unsustainable. Only by disrupting your prospect's Status Quo Bias can you open up a conversation about changing to your solution.

how do you build a buying vision?

Rob Perrilleon
SVP of Delivery Services

To convince new prospects to change from their status quo, you need to tell a powerful, disruptive story that makes their current situation seem unsafe and unsustainable.

▸ Learn more in this video

win back lost revenue

In a recent B2B industry survey, 90 percent of companies said that their ability to win back lost customers was important to their success.

That's no surprise. Supply chain disruptions are creating logistical bottlenecks. Service failures are all but routine. And many companies have increased prices in response to rising costs. Meanwhile, your competitors are circling, trying to lure your customers away with promises of lower prices and better support.

So, despite your best efforts to keep them, some of your formerly loyal customers have likely decided to leave. And as you're recovering from the turbulence of the last few years, those former customers represent an enticing opportunity to recoup your lost revenue—if you can win them back.

In fact, our studies show that winning back former customers is a more significant focus for high-performing sellers than it is for low-performing sellers.

Your former customers aren't motivated by the same messages as existing customers. But they also aren't quite new prospects. They're already familiar with your solution, and if they left recently, Status Quo Bias might not be as formidable of a foe.

So, what approach works best?

Behavioral research from B2B DecisionLabs suggests that **your customer's motivations for leaving will affect their willingness to return**.

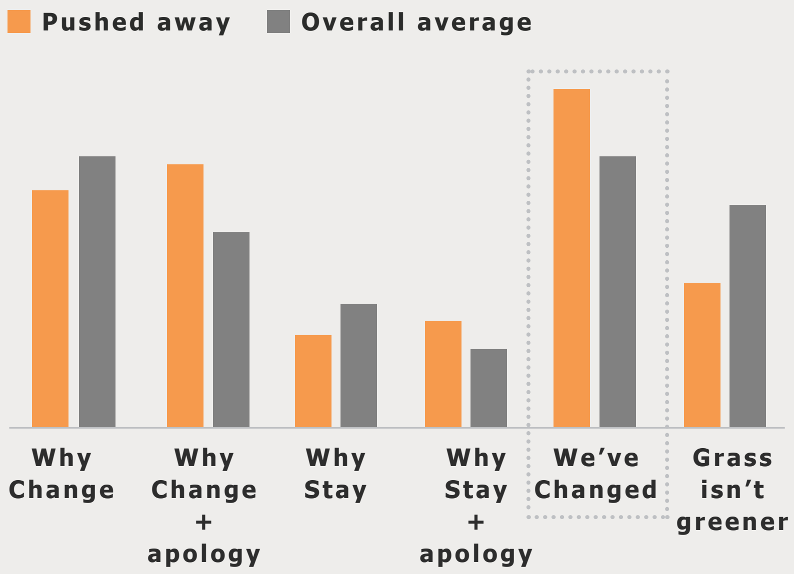
If your former customer was lured away by another vendor, you need to disrupt their Status Quo Bias and persuade them to change. But if they were pushed away, whether by a service failure or inventory-related issues, an approach that communicates how *you* have changed—and invites the customer to revisit your solution considering these new improvements—works best.

the research behind Why Return

Dr. Leff Bonney
Research Director, B2B DecisionLabs

According to a real-world behavioral study we conducted, **customers who were pushed away by a service failure or inventory issue** were more motivated by how the vendor—thanks to the customer's feedback—has taken steps to fix problems that might have caused the customer to leave.

Meetings booked: pushed away vs. average



▸ **Read the full research study here.**

protect *profitability*

Deals are becoming increasingly complex.

Not only are you trying to convince a double-digit buying committee to approve the purchase—you're also competing with competitors' offers that aim to undercut your value.

Whether you're wading through the mire of late-stage negotiations or trying to persuade your customers to pay more, how well you protect and manage your margins can majorly impact your long-term profitability.

In these tense moments, your ability to create profitable outcomes depends on how deftly your sellers and customer success managers navigate critical buying conversations—moments that have the potential to change the nature of your opportunity and recast the buyer's perception of your value and influence.

You probably have a well-defined process of key steps to follow in these conversations. But your buyers have their own wants and needs that you need to respond to along the way. And if you're not careful, you could begin to make concessions that erode your margins and give away your value.

There's plenty at risk during these crucial moments. But if you understand your buyer's psychology in these pricing conversations, learn how to manage the tension as a positive force, and avoid value leaks to protect your pricing; you can begin to exchange value, rather than give it away.

the anchoring effect

Catherine Alexander
VP of Training Services

Your prospects and customers will always latch onto the first number they hear during pricing conversations.

This happens because of a cognitive bias known as the "Anchoring Effect." When faced with a decision that involves uncertainty, people naturally tend to anchor on a reference point and ascribe value based on that.

Where does the anchor come from? If you're messaging right—you.

▸ Learn more in this video

RETENTION

retain existing customers

According to analysts, as much as 70–80 percent of the average company's revenue comes from existing customers.

Yet, **most sales and marketing leaders (nearly 60 percent) see no need to take a different approach between customer acquisition and customer expansion**. More than half believe the same provocative messages they use when communicating with new prospects are still applicable in a renewal scenario.

Despite this pervasive belief, B2B DecisionLabs research shows that customer retention conversations require an entirely different set of messages and skills.

When you're the outsider, engaging new prospects, it makes sense to use a provocative, challenging approach that disrupts their Status Quo Bias and persuades them to choose you.

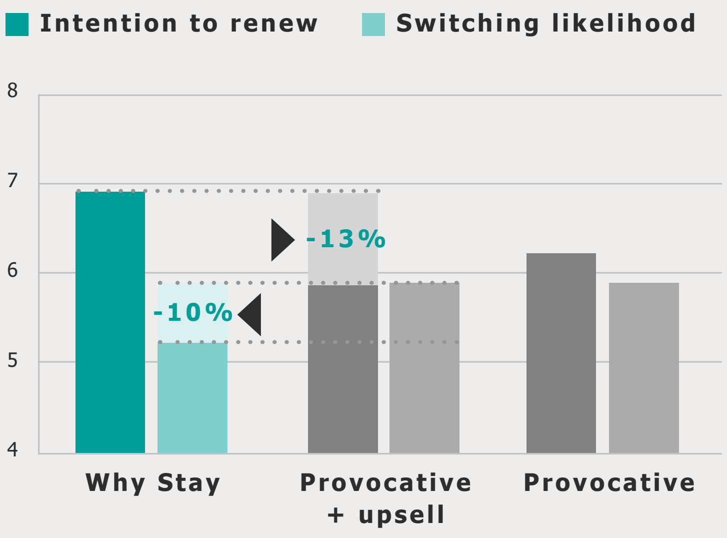
But when you're the insider, defending your incumbent position with existing customers, *you are the status quo*. So you shouldn't disrupt Status Quo Bias—you need to reinforce your value and highlight the reasons why you're still the safest choice.

Thankfully, because you're now their status quo, your existing customers are naturally more inclined to stay with you than change to a new solution. But that doesn't mean you can rest on your laurels. To retain your existing customers and reduce churn, you need to proactively develop and deliver messages, skills, and content that reinforces your value.

the research behind Why Stay

Dr. Zakary Tormala
Social Psychologist
Stanford Graduate School of Business

According to a B2B DecisionLabs behavioral study led by Dr. Zakary Tormala, a Why Stay message that reinforces Status Quo Bias led to a 13 percent boost in intention to renew. Buyers were 10 percent less likely to switch or shop around, compared to more provocative messages.



Read the full research study here.

expand and grow revenue

When most companies talk to existing customers, they often only focus on the problem they initially needed to solve.

Perhaps it's because they don't want to rock the boat. But it's a huge mistake to assume your customer doesn't want to hear about shifting industry pressures that will put their goals at risk.

The business world is dynamic. Your customers face evolving pressures that continually change their requirements for success. On top of that, your competition will relentlessly challenge your position as your customer's status quo.

If you aren't continually reinforcing your value and showing your customer how they can stay with you *and* stay competitive, they're even more vulnerable to your competitors' disruptive messages, and you risk losing the relationship.

The goal is to make your customer feel safe and assured that they're already working with a partner who can help them solve new challenges as they arise. They won't need to look elsewhere.

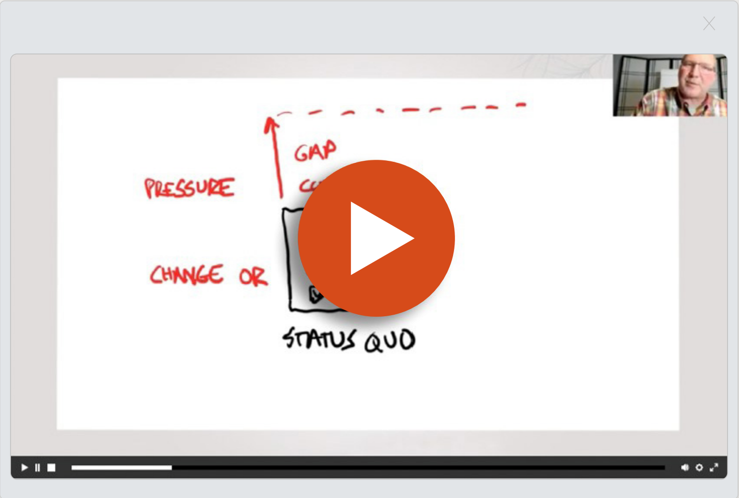
Even if your customer isn't ready to act on the pressures you expose now, you were the one who brought them to light (not your competitor), so you get the credit. That bolsters the protective barrier around your relationship and opens up more opportunities for expansion conversations.

from "or" to "and"

Paul George
Senior Consultant

Your competition will continue to challenge your position as your customer's status quo. If you're not showing them how they can stay with you *and* stay competitive, you risk losing the relationship.

▸ **Learn more in this video**




execute your growth strategy with clarity and confidence
identify your
growth levers

identify your *growth levers*

Once you prioritize your growth play, you need to consider which levers you need to pull to execute that play successfully.

Remember, each growth play requires a distinct approach. Your buyer's goals and motivations are different depending on their situation, so you need to adapt your messages, content, skills, and even your processes to match that psychology.

You also need to develop your managers to coach your revenue teams to execute effectively. And with the right technology in place, your revenue teams can deploy your growth plays faster and with precision.

PROCESS | **LEADERSHIP** | **SKILLS** | **MESSAGING** | **TECHNOLOGY**

canonize your *process*

Many organizations rely on their own internal definition of what the sales process should look like. But if your sales, marketing, and customer success teams aren't following a consistent sales process that aligns with your buyers' behaviors and motivations, miscommunications and dropped handoffs can cost you customers.

In fact, **buyers most often cite a misstep in the sales process as the top reason they abandon a deal**—more than price or product features, according to customer data from Primary Intelligence.

Organizations that follow formal sales processes can reap several major benefits, including:

- **Faster sales cycles** through disciplined opportunity management at each stage.
- **Stronger pipeline** through proactive outreach and qualification.
- **Higher close rates** through smarter late-stage closing activities.
- **Pipeline visibility and forecast accuracy** based on buyers' behaviors and decisions.
- **Account expansion** through effective renewal and upsell strategies.
- **Team-based selling** that connects every commercial function.

For an acquisition growth play, your opportunity management process should give sellers the tools and frameworks they need to have more consistent conversations with prospects. Following the process enables your sellers to forecast more accurately, build more pipeline, and close more deals.

It's also imperative that your sellers and customer success managers have a solid account development process to guide their renewal and expansion conversations. With this process in place, you'll enable your teams to reduce churn and increase your profitability, all while improving the customer experience.

follow the playbook

Eric Nitschke
VP Commercial Enablement

Sellers need to say *something* in a sales conversation. It can be either the right message to match your strategy or an off-book message that derails the deal.

But without knowing precisely what approach to take, sellers will often take a chance with their own message.

How do you build, package, and deploy the right message in a way that sellers will actually use it?

Playbooks.

Playbooks consist of a collection of messages, content, and enablement tools to prepare sellers to be successful during their calls, meetings, and presentations.

Whether your sellers need to learn your win-back message before a meeting, or they need a quick refresher on a technique to make their presentation more memorable, playbooks provide a flexible solution that can cover a wide variety of growth plays.

Having a playbook helps drive behavior change in your sellers, so they can implement your revenue growth strategy effectively in every conversation with your prospects and customers.

LEADERSHIP

empower your *leaders*

B2B companies might invest heavily in their sellers, but sales managers get overlooked, despite being one of the most significant influencers for growing revenue.

In fact, **only 11 percent of companies train their sales managers to a high extent**, and 22 percent don't train their sales managers at all, according to a study from ASTD (the American Society for Training and Development).

That same study found a "significant positive correlation" between the extent to which those managers were trained and the percentage of their sellers who meet their sales quota. Conversely, companies that didn't train their sales managers suffered lower sales performance.

Managers often feel the strain of having to speak to sellers about any and every issue, while also investing most of their best energy in closing deals and operating as a "super rep" themselves. They get mired in day-to-day tactical activities—troubleshooting problems and reporting on performance metrics.

As a result, their coaching becomes reactive, inconsistent, and inefficient.

For your growth strategy to succeed, **your first-line managers must elevate their position.** That means pulling your managers out of the day-to-day minutia and empowering them to become leaders among your teams.

How? When you implement a repeatable sales coaching system, your sales managers will have a blueprint for turning task-driven chaos into a smart coaching cadence.

Managers will know what activities they should (and shouldn't) focus on. And they'll lead more helpful coaching conversations that will meaningfully contribute to your revenue growth strategy.

build a sales coaching system

Doug Hutton
EVP Customer Experience

There are four key sales manager roles you need to think about when building an effective coaching system.

1. Sales planning – Create strategic plans for achieving peak performance across regions, territories, and accounts.

2. Pipeline and forecast management – Help sellers develop a healthy pipeline and accurately forecast.

3. Sales execution – Provide 1:1 coaching and co-selling support to help sellers navigate opportunities, lead compelling sales conversations, and win more deals.

4. Team development – Ensure sellers have the knowledge and skills required to succeed.

To fulfill all four of these roles effectively, sales managers need guidance. Just like sellers need a sales playbook, your sales managers need a coaching playbook.

build effective *messages*

It's tempting to believe that prospects and customers will all follow the same set of repeatable steps that eventually lead them to choose you. But in reality, your buyers are asking weighty questions that are specific to their current situation.

For example, while new prospects are asking, "Why should I change?" and "Why should I choose you vs. a competitor?" existing customers are asking "Why should I stay with you?" and "Why should I buy more from you?"

Your buyers' questions, behaviors, and motivations change from one moment to the next. That's why you need to tailor your messages to match your buyer's specific decision-making psychology.

There are two major advantages to using message frameworks to match your buyer's motivations within each growth play.

First, using consistent messages based on frameworks makes it much easier to create content to deliver those messages in a systematic, repeatable way.

Second, when your messages are based on science, it doesn't matter whether you're a marketer, a seller, or a customer success manager—it's all about responding to the buyer's situation. As long as you're using the message framework to fit that situation, you're automatically speaking with one voice across your entire revenue organization.

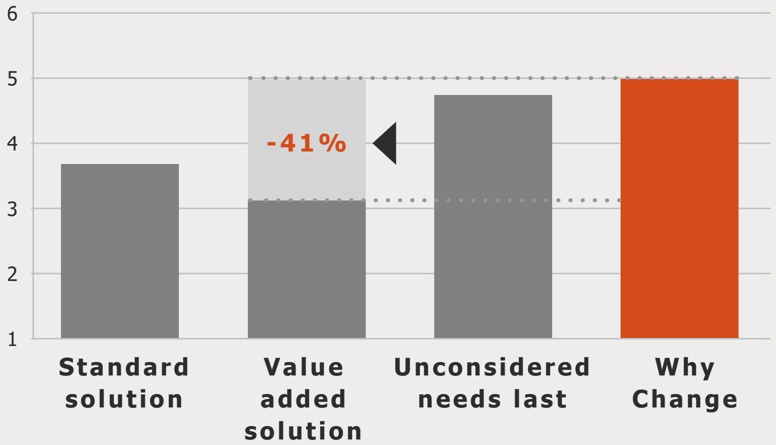
the research behind Why Change

Dr. Zakary Tormala
Social Psychologist
Stanford Graduate School of Business

According to a B2B DecisionLabs study led by behavioral expert Dr. Zakary Tormala, the Why Change message framework significantly outperforms other acquisition messages.

Why Change was perceived as 41 percent more unique and 11 percent higher quality. Buyers were also 10 percent more likely to purchase vs. the other groups in the study.

Message perceived as unique



Read the full research study here.

develop winning *skills*

You can follow a pristine process and provide potent messages and content.

But **the fate of every budding deal ultimately comes down to a conversation between your buyer and your seller**. How well your sellers can articulate the value of your solution and motivate your buyer is paramount to the success of your revenue growth strategy.

Interestingly, most high-performing sellers have their own proverbial "bag of tricks" that they rely on. These are often the fruitage of their own experiences, trial and error, and techniques that they've found to work best for them over the years.

This isn't necessarily a bad thing, but most organizations then attempt to train the rest of their team to replicate the techniques used by those top sellers. Meanwhile, not everyone has the same natural talents or abilities, nor are all personalities conducive to particular techniques.

Instead of trying to replicate what works for your top performers, shift your training focus to the skills and techniques that appeal to how decision makers frame value and make decisions.

You know by now that your buyers are asking different questions in different situations as they determine whether or not they will buy from you. And research shows that if your sellers are using the same approach for every conversation, it will hurt your chances of winning the deal.

The stories they tell in these moments are critical, but *how* they tell those stories is equally as important. They need to know how to engage people effectively, grab and hold their attention (whether in person or on digital channels), and persuade them to decide in your favor.

All of that takes a diverse set of skills, sharpened with the situational awareness to know when and how to adapt to each situation.

tell stories with contrast

Catherine Alexander
VP of Training Services

Numbers are helpful, but they aren't enough to sway your buyer on an emotional level. You also need to help them visualize the gap between "before" and "after" your solution. Show them how much pain they can avoid by choosing you.

Your value lies in the contrast they see. The greater the contrast between the "before" and "after" states in your story, the more willing your buyer will be to buy, renew, and grow the relationship.

▸ Learn more in this video

deploy the right *technology*

So far, you've seen why you need a documented sales process, a solid sales manager coaching system, message frameworks based on buying psychology, and situational selling skills for your team.

All of these are bound together and deployed efficiently with technology.

Choosing the right tech stack can feel overwhelming—there are countless platforms to choose from, all with different features available. When these systems are implemented poorly, teams adopt their own tools, data becomes scattered across too many platforms, and the technology that was meant to improve efficiency only serves to slow it down.

The goal is not to invest in more tools, but to intentionally choose the right tools to support your goals and implement them the right way.

Here are a few tech stack staples to consider in addition to your CRM:

1. **A prospecting tool** to collect and manage lead and contact data.
2. **Sales engagement software** to build and manage automated cadences.
3. **Sales enablement software** to organize and support your enablement content.
4. **Conversation intelligence software** to provide detailed coaching feedback.
5. **A personal video tool** to enable asynchronous video engagement.
6. **A learning management platform** to organize and support your training content.

By using the right technology and implementing it well, you can realize the power of data-driven insights and automation; and execute your growth strategy faster and with greater precision.

finding and fixing blind spots

Frank Pinder
EVP Digital Transformation

Conversation intelligence tools are table stakes for most sales organizations. They are valuable tools for managers to listen back on sales calls and then coach their sellers based on that data.

The problem is, managers are already stretched thin. They don't have time to manually review that data and then spend time individually coaching each seller.

What's more, that data only tells half of the story. Your managers and sellers hear what's on the recording, but they don't learn how the call affected your buyer's decision.

But, if you use automated win-loss-no decision analysis tools, you can get the full story from your buyers and uncover real opportunities to win more deals.

And if you use AI-powered sales coaching tools, your sellers can get immediate and tailored feedback based on their accuracy, delivery, and proficiency.

That means they're receiving continuous coaching in the flow of work—without waiting for their manager.

With the right technology and implementation, you can find and fix your revenue team's blind spots quickly and at scale.

execute your growth strategy with clarity and confidence

enable your *growth teams*

enable your *growth teams*

You've prioritized your growth plays. You've identified your growth levers for that initiative. But your growth strategy will only be successful if you can enable your teams to work in concert to execute it effectively.

Marketing, sales, and customer success are all having conversations with your buyers. Field sellers and digital sellers must use distinct techniques. And you might also have non-captive channels that you need to sell through or sell with.

Every team contributes to your growth strategy, but each one has different KPIs, different priorities, and different needs.

DEMAND MARKETING

DIGITAL SALES

FIELD SALES

CHANNEL SALES

CUSTOMER SUCCESS

marketing is moving further down the funnel

If you've been in marketing or demand generation for even a short time, you know better than anyone that your job has drastically changed over the last few years.

Marketing used to be about building awareness and running campaigns at the top of the funnel. Those campaigns generated interest and then, at some point, there was always a handoff to sales, who would ultimately guide the buyer toward a decision.

Those lines have blurred. Today, **at least 80 percent of the sales cycle happens in digital or remote settings**. And that has profound implications for your marketers.

Buyers aren't just talking to sales to make decisions—they're using digital content to learn and shop at their own pace.

While most marketing teams still create messages and content to drive awareness and consideration, buyers are using that same content to inform their decisions much further down the funnel. They're doing research, forming opinions, and sharing that information with other stakeholders *without talking to your sellers*.

Marketers are also more involved in keeping and growing business with existing customers. It's the marketing and demand organization—including sales development and business development teams—running renewal cadences, leading upsell campaigns, and creating business review decks. Your existing customers (not just prospects) are also using your marketing content to gauge whether they want to stay with your solution or change to something new.

As the role evolves, one thing is clear: It's no longer enough to drive awareness or interest—marketing is now in the business of directly influencing buying decisions.

what will buyers remember?

Leslie Talbot
SVP Marketing

In a recent industry survey, 87 percent of B2B marketers told us they were unsure or did not believe their audience acts on their content.

Even though most (91 percent) agreed that it's important for their audiences to remember their content, only 26 percent felt confident that the marketing materials they produce are, in fact, memorable.

And they're right to feel unsure.

People naturally remember, on average, only 10 percent of the information they consume after 48 hours. Our neuroscience research shows that this percentage varies. But on average, it's a very small portion.

To make matters worse, the small amount of information people do remember is completely random.

So, if your marketing content isn't built to appeal to how people remember information, your buyers might get the gist of your message, but their memories won't be precise enough to influence their decisions.

digital sellers are in the spotlight

If you aren't already embracing digital sales, the need to change has never been more urgent.

There are two main reasons why.

First, **buyer preferences have completely transformed over the past several years**.

Two out of three buyers prefer a digital self-service buying experience over traditional sales communications. Gartner predicts that 80 percent of all B2B sales interactions will occur in digital channels by 2025.

Second, industry data shows that **digital sales motions are more effective than field selling motions**.

A full 74 percent of B2B decision makers believe that new digital selling models are as effective as or more effective than pre-COVID models, according to McKinsey.

Data from McKinsey also shows that digital sellers can reach four times more accounts and generate 50 percent more revenue than their field sales counterparts.

Clearly, there's enormous opportunity for companies that leverage the right digital sales model. But as more companies adopt digital, competition for your buyer's attention and sales talent will only increase.

Companies need to build digital sales teams, and they need to do it more creatively than their competitors. But a digital team doesn't necessarily mean creating an entirely remote sales force. More likely, you'd develop a hybrid approach, where you leverage the most powerful aspects of new and traditional sales channels to boost revenue to new heights.

When done right, digital sales puts more of your sellers in front of buyers—when and where they want to buy.

transforming your team

Frank Pinder
EVP Digital Transformation

Forward-thinking organizations are giving digital sellers bigger roles and more autonomy.

Research from Boston Consulting Group indicates that over the next three years, 63 percent of organizations expect their field sales revenue to decrease, while 80 percent expect their inside/digital sales revenue to increase.

But digital selling requires a unique set of skills and competencies—one seller can no longer fulfill every need.

The traditional field seller might have managed every activity—including prospecting, CRM hygiene, appointment setting, inbound response, and closing conversations—all on their own.

Now, in a digital sales model, many of those activities are supported by more specialized roles, including PQRs (qualification), SDRs (inbound), BDRs (outbound), and ISRs (closing).

Every one of these roles is vital for running a successful digital sales organization.

field sales remains vital

Digital sales will continue to dominate for the foreseeable future.

But the digital takeover doesn't mean that face-to-face sales will become obsolete. There's no reason to proclaim the "death of the in-person sales meeting."

There was, after all, a time when companies were reluctant to film sports games because they feared people wouldn't want to go to the stadium. And, just like stadiums survived televised broadcasts, concerts survived music streaming services. In the past, an artist might have gone on tour to sell their albums. Now, they stream music to sell tickets for the tour.

Digital selling has changed the way people buy and sell. But that might just mean your sellers need to rock the virtual meeting for now, and potentially earn that face-to-face meeting later on.

And when they do meet with your buyers, field sellers need the in-person skills to win those conversations.

It's no longer enough to say, "Tell me what you want; I'll get it for you." Buyers want you to tell them what they *should* want. They might be doing their own research across many different digital channels, but buyers don't want to sift through all the information on their own—they need your sellers to make sense of it all and deliver new insights that will improve their performance.

To do that, your field sellers need to understand your buyer's underlying behaviors, build the confidence and competence to hold executive attention, and respond with situationally sharpened skills and messages that move the deal forward.

channel sales offers new opportunities

Many organizations rely on channel sales, or partner sales, to increase their revenue and reach without increasing headcount.

By leveraging the audiences and expertise of your affiliates, partners, and resellers, you can tap into new markets and buyer segments that you otherwise might not have access to.

But developing a successful channel sales program requires careful planning and execution.

Just like you enable your internal teams with processes, training, and messaging, you need to enable external partners. Partners need to be trained on your solution before they can sell it effectively. And they need ongoing enablement support to ensure they're delivering the most effective messages and content to their buyers at the right time.

That often requires a dedicated partner team to run your program. This team provides existing affiliates and resellers with the enablement support they need, while also recruiting new partners and strengthening those relationships over time.

Technology can also help improve your channel sales process and provide visibility into partner performance. Beyond CRM software, there are also specific Partner Relationship Management (PRM) tools, as well as Through-Channel Marketing Automation (TCMA) platforms to distribute your content among your partner networks.

Channel sales teams have tremendous potential to contribute to your revenue growth strategy—as long as they have the right messages, skills, tools, and resources.

customer success is the unsung hero

A recent industry survey from software provider Totango uncovered a surprising statistic: **60 percent of companies have lost accounts because they were unaware their key stakeholders and influencers were not aligned** or had left the organization.

Most customer success managers get so focused on adoption, utilization, satisfaction, and problem resolution, they lose track of the metrics and goals that decision makers actually care about.

Managing these foundational elements of the customer relationship is important, but doing so shouldn’t come at the expense of helping your customers hit their higher-level strategic goals.

Your customer’s executive decision makers approved the expense to work with you because your sales team promised them value—top-level value that would propel them toward their company’s strategic goals. But if you don’t show them how staying with you—and potentially buying more from you—will help them meet those goals, they’re more vulnerable to your competitors’ disruptive messages.

Customer success doesn’t need to become sales, but they do need to become value communicators.

Pleasing the customer is undoubtedly an important part of the job. But happiness isn’t enough. Customer success needs to uphold your customer’s best interests, which means helping them succeed in an increasingly complex and ever-changing business environment.

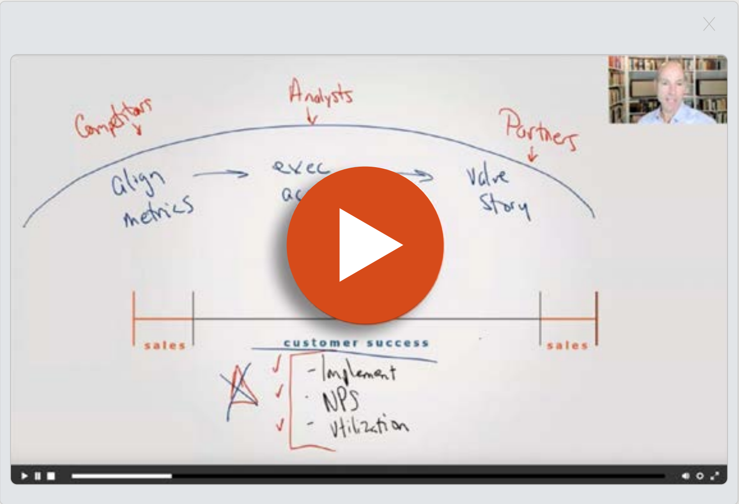
Customer success has the unique opportunity to grow their role and become not just advocates but also architects for ongoing revenue growth.

avoid the commercial messaging void

Rob Perrilleon
SVP of Delivery Services

If your customer success team isn’t bringing new insights and opportunities to your customers regularly, the relationship could get lost in the commercial messaging void.

Learn more in this video



execute your growth strategy with clarity and confidence

When you replace guesswork with science, you can align your approach to the way buyers actually make decisions. When you understand their subconscious, situational motivations, you can execute any growth play in the moment using the right message, skills, and technology to win that moment. And when you do all this, you'll be able to close the gap between strategies and outcomes—leading to faster sales cycles and outsized revenue growth.

PRIORITIZE YOUR GROWTH PLAYS

What are the specific strategies or initiatives you need to launch to address your top revenue challenges?

IDENTIFY YOUR GROWTH LEVERS

Target the right growth levers, or focus areas, that will have the most immediate and profound impact on your performance.

ENABLE YOUR GROWTH TEAMS

Enable all your growth teams—not just sales—to transform growth into a true, cross-functional effort.

about Corporate Visions

Corporate Visions is the leading provider of science-backed revenue growth services for sales, marketing, and customer success. Global B2B companies work with Corporate Visions to articulate value and promote growth in three ways:

- **Make Value Situational** by distinguishing your commercial programs between customer acquisition, retention, and expansion.
- **Make Value Specific** by creating and delivering customer conversations that communicate concrete value, change behavior, and motivate buying decisions.
- **Make Value Systematic** by equipping your commercial engine to deliver consistent and persistent touches across the entire Customer Deciding Journey.

Only with Corporate Visions will your revenue teams get science-backed training to articulate value in every critical conversation with prospects and customers.

CONTACT US TO LEARN MORE

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Tim Riesterer, Chief Strategy Officer at Corporate Visions, is dedicated to helping companies improve their conversations with prospects and customers to win more business. A visionary researcher, thought leader, keynote speaker, and practitioner with more than 20 years of experience in marketing and sales management, Riesterer is co-author of four books, including *Customer Message Management*, *Conversations that Win the Complex Sale*, *The Three Value Conversations*, and *The Expansion Sale*.

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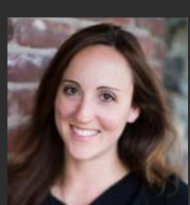

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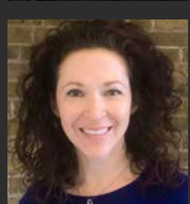

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